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*Committee 13*  
*Watch*  
DCI/IC 74-1632

6 JUN 1974

25X1 MEMORANDUM FOR:

OCI/INDICO

SUBJECT: Comments on 24 May draft, "Revitalizing  
the USIB Watch Mechanism"

25X1 1. As we have indicated to you orally, IC/PRD generally agrees with your proposal.  memorandum (attached) reflects maximum objectives in reforming the Watch mechanism, but we will support your proposal in its present form as a useful first step.

2. We have these specific comments for whatever considerations you choose to give them:

a. The distinction between the DCI's responsibility for providing a warning message, and the role of ASD(I) and DIA in supporting NCA is valid, but the argument for a separate mechanism based on the need for a "devil's advocate" seems weak. (The task of devising better challenge procedures is in any case broader than the watch/warning responsibility.) Moreover it would be wise to recognize that in itself the shift of the operation to CIA could aggravate, rather than ease, the problem of insufficient J-3 type information (pp. 1-2, 7, 20-22).

b. The defenders of the status quo will argue that the product has only shifted "focus" because the nature of the attack threat has shifted over the years. Instead of the theoretical possibility of direct all-out war between the USSR and the US, the Watch specialists have seen over the years actual, lower-scale attacks in various parts of the world--i.e., in the countries mentioned. The status quo advocates will ask why in principle the existing mechanism cannot readjust its "focus" on its own. Offhand, we do not have a ready answer to that question (pp. 3-4, 8-9).

c. The existence of the collection program you mention argues strongly for having a capability for warning more often than once a week. But the collection program is still at least several months short of operational status. Since nobody can judge precisely what form(s) of reporting may be required, and on principle there are strong pressures against new products--especially daily products--we urge that you offer, as a first option, inclusion of the daily temperature report in an existing product, the NIB or the NID. As

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a second option you might advocate publishing a formal warning report only when events justify, plus issuing a daily SWC "work sheet" (no cover, typed and Xeroxed, strictly informal, limited dissemination) in order to maintain discipline (pp. 5, 10, 14-16).

d. You do not say how the new mechanism will improve the collection of warning intelligence (other than to provide a forum for discussion). In view of [redacted] concerns, we suggest you indicate the need for the SWC to be able to task the collectors (p. 11).

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e. We agree with the point others have made that the problem of updating the night shift personnel at the Operations Center does not deserve mention in your proposal (pp. 15-16).

f. Since a goal of your proposal is to narrow the focus of the warning function, we suggest you delete Czechoslovakia as a "possible enemy attack" scenario (p. 18).

3. We are forwarding these comments--and [redacted]--to the D/DCI/IC for his reactions.

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[redacted]  
Lewis J. Lapnam  
Chief, Product Review Division

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Att

cc: D/DCI/IC

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*Committee 15*



6 June 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: What To Do With the National Watch Center  
And the Watch Committee

25X REFERENCE: Draft of [REDACTED]

1. Once again the question of what to do with the NIC/WC has been raised. The referenced draft paper proposes to introduce the concept of warning instead of merely continuing the watch function. This is an admirable step, but it has implications which must be clearly understood. Unlike the watch function, the warning function implies that decisions and actions are associated.

2. As a result of the Middle East post-mortem exercises, one of the tasks was to examine the alerting\* mechanism within the intelligence community. Here is an excellent opportunity to combine the watch function and the alerting function as applied to the intelligence community. By so doing the same procedures would also generate warning inputs to the consumer. These inputs would now have a greater credibility because of the alerting mechanism functions generated by the community warning procedure.

3. By inclusion of J-3 inputs the warning function does become "national" in character, paralleling the functions of the NOIWON and NOIAN. Thus, in effect, one could have a National Warning Center and a National Warning Committee. These terms are much less confusing than the use of the term "strategic" which means too many things to too many people.

4. Instead of a periodic product (daily, weekly, monthly) the warning product should be generated by events themselves. This way the product will receive the attention it deserves. The product should also be put in probabilistic terms so that the "temperature" changes can be noted.

5. The scope of warning should be tuned to detecting "changes of state" of any political or military activity which could conceivably lead to a confrontation of major powers.

\*By alerting we mean the decisions and actions which concentrate intelligence resources to respond to a particular tension or crisis situation. Examples would be:

- 25X1 (1) putting NPIC on a three-shift basis  
25X1 (2) [REDACTED]  
(3) changing collection targeting priorities  
(4) [REDACTED]

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6. To summarize: Warning is not warning unless decisions and actions are implied. By applying this principle to the process of alerting the intelligence community, the warning function will have a greater credibility when applied to outside consumers.



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